3:Zeisberger M-5 (1767-1780)1910
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133 The Muskingum (meaning Elk's Eye, so called because of the numbers of elk that formerly fed on its banks, these animals being found there even at the present time) empties into the Ohio two hundred miles below Pittsburg. It is navigable for canoes or light boats, which the Indians use upon it, from its source to its mouth.

The country is diversified with hillocks and gentle risings, but no great mountains are to be seen to the west of the Alleghene Mountains. The Indians are, therefore, yet in the possession of the best land. Along the creeks and rivers the soil is very rich and commonly called "The Bottoms." This sort of [311] land is chosen by the Indians for agricultural purposes not only because it is easily worked, but also because it yields aboundant crops for many years. When, however, their fields begin to [241] grow grass they leave them and break new land, for they regard it as too troublesome to root out the grass. For winter crops such soil would be too rich and would yield little or nothing. But corn and all else raised by the Indians thrives in rich soil.

The higher lying land, generally of medium richness, though some of this also is extraordinarily fertile, is the best for winter grains, and as but little of it is stony soil it would be difficult to find a spot that could not be cultivated to advantage.

132 Concerning the climate, I can only speak from a twelve years' acquaintance with the country. In the summer it is quite warm, especially in July and August, which are the two hottest months; woolen garments can hardly be worn at this season of the year. The winter is generally very mild. The snow is never deep, nor does it remain long on the ground. Last winter, 1779-80, which was very severe in Pensilvania, snow fell once to a depth of two feet. In eight days this was gone, though the ground was covered with snow most of the time between New Year and February. As I have neither chart nor instrument, I am unable to say in what degree of latitude it lies, though I reckon it to be about the same as that of Philadelphia. A distance of a hundred English miles north or south makes a very perceptible difference in temperature; for in Sandusky on Lake Erie, it is much colder and the snow is much deeper than here in the Muskingum Valley and along the Scioto,[84] which empties into